

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

SPECIAL ORDER NO. 41

December 9, 2005

**SUBJECT: PROCESSING FIREARMS WITH OBLITERATED SERIAL NUMBERS**

**PURPOSE:** The procedures outlined in this Order will prevent the premature authorization and destruction of firearms with obliterated serial numbers.

**PROCEDURE:**

**I. SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION DIVISION-FIREARMS ANALYSIS**

**UNIT'S RESPONSIBILITY (SID-FAU).** When SID-FAU personnel complete the test firing process of a firearm that has an obliterated serial number, it shall be returned to the Handgun Evidence Envelope, Form 10.20.0. The employee shall then:

- \* Attach a "Hold for FAU" tag to the outside of the Handgun Evidence Envelope, Form 10.20.0;
- \* Enter "OBLIT" or "OBLITERATED" using large **red** letters in the serial number box of the **SID USE ONLY-WEAPON DESCRIPTION & LAB NOTES** section of the Handgun Evidence Envelope, Form 10.20.0, indicating the envelope contains a firearm with an obliterated serial number;
- \* Complete a Firearms Analysis Unit Request, SID Form F116, and process the request and firearm utilizing existing procedure;
- \* Make a copy of the Firearms Analysis Unit Request, SID Form F116, and indicate the Area of booking in the left margin based on the DR Number;

**Note:** The original shall be filed as normal. The duplicate copy shall be sent via Department mail to the responsible Area Property Disposition Coordinator (PDC) in the Area of booking.

- \* If the serial number inspection or analysis can not be completed immediately, return the firearm to the responsible property room for storage; and,
- \* When the analysis is completed, SID-FAU personnel shall remove the "Hold for FAU" tag and **mark out** the "oblit/obliterated" notation on the outside of the Handgun Evidence Envelope, Form 10.20. The firearm shall be returned to the responsible property room for storage.

**Note:** Scientific Investigation Division-Firearms Analysis Unit personnel are reminded of the Follow-up Investigation requirements in Department Manual Section 4/540.32.

**II. PROPERTY DISPOSITION COORDINATOR'S RESPONSIBILITY.** Upon receipt of the duplicate Firearms Analysis Unit Request, SID Form F116, the PDC shall, regardless of investigative responsibility, place an Investigative Hold (IH) on the item(s) in the Automated Property Information Management System (APIMS). When completing the INVESTIGATIVE HOLD INFORMATION screen, the PDC shall:

- \* Type "**OBLIT SERIAL#**" in the INTERNAL CASE NBR field;
- \* Type "**OBLIT SERIAL# CALL SID-FAU BEFORE DESTRUCTION**" on the first line of the ADDITIONAL INFO field; and,
- \* Complete the Investigative Hold (IH) as normal.

**Note:** The PDC, via APIMS or other source, should determine the proper Primary Investigative Unit (PIU) and, if needed, forward the Firearms Analysis Unit Request, SID Form F116, to the responsible PDC with a notation that an IH has already been placed on the item(s). The PDC may then file the form.

When a firearm with an obliterated serial number is no longer of evidentiary value, an Item Detail Summary, APIMS Form 10.06.2, shall be generated.

The Item Detail Summary, APIMS Form 10.06.2, shall be forwarded by the PDC to the responsible Investigating Officer for disposition instructions along with any relevant information. The "**OBLIT SERIAL#**" notation on the APIMS Form 10.06.2 should be highlighted.

**III. INVESTIGATING OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITY.** The I/O shall be responsible for the following:

- \* Upon receipt of a Property Report, Form, 10.01, containing information of a long gun firearm with an obliterated serial number, the I/O shall request analysis via SID;
- \* If SID-FAU personnel indicate that a serial number was raised, complete a Follow-up Investigation, Form 3.14, containing the additional descriptive information; and,

**Note:** The concerned I/O shall ensure that a copy of the completed Follow-up Investigation, Form 3.14, is forwarded to Property Division.

- \* Upon receipt of an Item Detail Summary, APIMS Form 10.06.2, from the PDC, the I/O shall determine the legal and/or evidentiary necessity of retaining the item(s). If the firearm with the obliterated serial number is no longer of legal/evidentiary value, the I/O shall contact SID-FAU to verify that the analysis has been completed. Depending upon the information received, the I/O shall make a disposition determination, complete the Item Detail Summary, APIMS Form 10.06.2, and return it to the PDC for entry into APIMS.

Investigative personnel are reminded of the Follow-up Investigation requirements in Department Manual Section 4/540.32, and Detective Operations Manual, Volume I, Sections 154.10, 154.15 and 154.16, when complying with this Order.

**IV. PROPERTY DIVISION'S RESPONSIBILITY.** Property Division personnel who handle firearms that have been authorized for destruction shall pay particular attention to those that are marked "obliterated serial numbers."

If the Handgun Evidence Envelope, Form 10.20.0, still shows that an investigation is on-going (i.e., "Hold for FAU" tag still attached, "oblit/obliterated" printed on the Handgun Evidence Envelope, Form 10.20.0, not crossed out), the responsible property officer shall place an Investigative Hold on the firearm(s) and any related items (i.e., magazines, holsters, ammunition, etc.). The property officer completing the INVESTIGATIVE HOLD INFORMATION screen of the APIMS shall also:

- \* Type "**OBLIT SERIAL#**" in the INTERNAL CASE NBR field; and,
- \* Type "**OBLIT SERIAL# CALL SID-FAU BEFORE DESTRUCTION**" on the first line of the ADDITIONAL INFO field.

**Note:** These notations will alert the PDC and the responsible I/O that a firearm has an obliterated serial number, has been held for analysis and requires special consideration.

**AMENDMENTS:** This Order adds Section 4/540.35 to the Department Manual.

**AUDIT RESPONSIBILITY:** The Commanding Officer, Administrative and Technical Services Bureau, shall monitor compliance with this directive in accordance with Department Manual Section 0/080.30.

WILLIAM J. BRATTON  
Chief of Police

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